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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY

MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Letter dated 29 May 1997 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the congratulatory message from the President of the Russian Federation B. N. Yeltsin to the Heads of State and Government and the peoples of Africa on the occasion of Africa Day, the 34th anniversary of the founding on 25 May 1963 of the Organization of African Unity (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 42, 81, 88 and 99 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) S. LAVROV

* A/52/50.

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ANNEX

Congratulatory message sent on 25 May 1997 by the President of the Russian Federation to the Heads of State and Government and the peoples of the African countries

On the occasion of Africa Day, which symbolizes the start of Africa's journey along the path of free and independent development, I extend my sincere and cordial congratulations to the Heads of State and Government and the peoples of the African countries.

The increasing participation of African States in world affairs and their positive contribution to strengthening international and regional security are welcomed in the Russian Federation, which has long-standing traditions of good relations and cooperation with Africa.

We follow the varied activities of the Organization of African Unity, which incarnates the collective wisdom of the African community, with constant interest and attention. We support its efforts to coordinate the activities of the countries of the continent with a view to ensuring sustainable development and broader mobilization of their potential and resources. We are satisfied to note the positive trends in the sphere of political and economic transformations and the establishment of integration mechanisms.

In the Russian Federation we are deeply moved by the pain and the suffering inflicted on African peoples by the remaining flashpoints in the continent. We consequently advocate an early peaceful settlement of the conflicts and are firmly committed to continuing our active role in international peacemaking efforts with a view to eliminating sources of tension in Africa. We welcome the steps to consolidate peace and security and to create effective instruments for responding to crises in the region.

The development of relations with African States is an important component of the Russian Federation's foreign policy. We believe that our feelings of friendship and mutual sympathy, which have stood the test of time, constitute a good basis for consolidating political dialogue in a new context through joint efforts, and for promoting diverse and mutually beneficial relations in the interests of our countries and peoples, and for the sake of peace and international cooperation.

I wish the friendly peoples of Africa happiness, prosperity, well-being and success in addressing the considerable tasks which they face on the threshold of the twenty-first century.

(Signed) Boris YELTSIN